take up this issue at SAARC, NAM and United Nations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government do not have any such proposal under consideration at present.

Bank population ratio in Assam

160. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present all India average of banks per population;

(b) what is the present bank population ratio in Assam;

(c) whether it is fact that Assam is an under-banked State with only 981 bank branches as in March, 1988;

(d) whether there is any proposal for improving the situation; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (e) The average population per bank office (APPBO) as at the end of December, 1987 was 12,000 for the country as a whole and 20,000 for Assam State as a whole. It would be seen that APPBO in Assam is higher than the All India ratio. As at the end of December, 1987 there were 1013 bank branches functioning in Assam. The Reserve Bank of India has allotted 233 eligible centres to commercial banks, including Regional Rural Banks, for opening their branches at rural and semi-urban centres in Assam under the current Branch Licensing Policy for 1985—90. In addition 8 urban centres have also been allotted to the banks for opening their branches under the current Branch Licensing Policy.

Measures to Control Floods in Assam

161. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have received a proposal from the Assam Government urging upon the Ministry to identify short and medium term measures within Assam itself for controlling the recurring floods of the turbulent Brahmaputra since there is a fair degree of uncertainties in the inter-State long term projects contemplated in the Master Plan prepared by the Brahmaputra Board; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Normally, flood management schemes are formulated and executed by the State Government fixing *inter se* priorities within the budget allocations. But considering the magnitude of the problem of floods in Assam, the Central Government has been providing central loan assistance to the Government of Assam since 1974-75 for flood management works. Out of the provision of Rs. 149.93 crores in the Seventh Plan in the Central Sector, Rs. 70 crores has been allocated for such assistance to Assam. During the period 1985-86 to 1987-88, an amount of Rs. 49 50 crores has already been released and a provision of Rs. 21 crores has been proposed for 1988-89. The schemes qualifying for such assistance are identified by a Steering Committee in which the Secretary, Flood Control Deptt., Government of Assam is also a member. It is for the Government of Assam to sort out the priorities with the Steering Committee for execution of short term measures of flood management within the resources available.

News-item captioned "Ghiesing threatens Final War"

162. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned